

Week Ending Friday, December 2, 1994

**Remarks at the State Dinner for
President Leonid Kuchma of
Ukraine**

November 22, 1994

Ladies and gentlemen, President Kuchma, Mrs. Kuchma, members of the Ukrainian delegation, diplomatic corps, Ukrainian-Americans, and distinguished guests, tonight we meet to celebrate a new friendship between our two nations and a new freedom for the people of the Ukraine. We also celebrate our peoples' devotion to the shared values that produce peace and prosperity. In a time when it is tempting to take the easy way out, Ukraine has set for itself the highest goals.

Mr. President, people around the world admire you for your wisdom in leading your country toward a non-nuclear future, a move now heralded around the world. And we applaud your courage on embarking on the difficult path of economic reform, a path that holds the promise of turning the vast resources of your country into real prosperity. As you strive to build a peaceful and prosperous Ukraine, we will stand by you and work with you.

The Slavic root of the name Ukraine means "borderland," but the independent Ukraine of today is at the very heart of Europe. It occupies a central place in our world. Our freedom and your freedom are bound together. We share the same desire to build a safer and better world for our children.

Mr. President, you are renowned as the man who ran Pivdenmash, the largest aerospace plant in the world. Just as you brought that vast operation to the pinnacle of technical excellence, we know you will be able to bring the hard work of reform down to Earth and that you will deploy all your engineering skill to the construction of a new democratic nation. I might also add that a democratic Ukraine supports the idea of a

democratic Russia, which is best for Russia, Ukraine, and the United States.

Let me close with a story. More than a century ago in the winter of 1858, the great Ukrainian national poet, Taras Shevchenko, had just returned to St. Petersburg from internal exile in the Russian Far East. There he met the acclaimed American black actor, Ira Aldridge, who was in the city performing Shakespeare. The son of Ukrainian serfs and the son of American slaves became fast friends. Theirs was a friendship born of shared ideals, above all the dream of freedom for all peoples. It was that dream that led Shevchenko to condemn despotism with the line, "Freedom knows no dying." Ira Aldridge was so impressed by his friend Shevchenko that it was said of him that forever after he carried Ukraine in his heart.

The steadfast devotion to freedom that brought Shevchenko and Aldridge together has also brought us together tonight. So I ask all of you to join me in a toast to President and Mrs. Kuchma, to the growing friendship of our peoples, and the bright future of a prosperous and free Ukraine.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:28 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

November 26, 1994

Good morning, and a happy Thanksgiving weekend to all of you. To the millions of Americans who have traveled to be with loved ones during this special time of year, I wish you a safe and peaceful journey home. We Americans have a lot to be thankful for this Thanksgiving.

On behalf of all of our citizens, I want to begin by thanking our brave service men and women who are so many miles from home

this Thanksgiving, serving our country with honor overseas, in every corner of the world and especially those who are working at restoring democracy in Haiti and keeping the peace in the Persian Gulf.

This is the first Thanksgiving since the dawn of the nuclear age when parents can tuck their children into bed at night knowing that no Russian missiles are pointed at the children of the United States. The third largest nuclear power, Ukraine, has just agreed to eliminate all of its nuclear weapons, and they're being dismantled with our assistance. Just this week, the United States removed a major nuclear stockpile, enough for 20 nuclear devices from the former Soviet republic of Kazakhstan. And finally, we have concluded an agreement with North Korea to freeze and dismantle that country's ability to build nuclear weapons.

Over the past year, we've also been privileged to see the American dreams of freedom, democracy, and peace advanced with our support in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, in South Africa, in Haiti, and Eastern and Central Europe, full of people who are making courageous efforts to escape the shackles of the past and realize their own dreams for tomorrow.

For America to remain strong, however, around the world we know we have to be strong at home. Therefore, we must keep striving to keep our Government working again for ordinary Americans, to improve our economy, to give our people the chance to build a more prosperous and secure future in the 21st century.

We're in the process of great changes, but we have more to do. We have 5 million more jobs than we had 22 months ago but still too many people who never get a pay raise and who are losing their health benefits. We have more loans for middle class college students. But still there are too many who need more education all throughout their lives, including working people. We have a tough new crime bill, but there's a lot to do to make our streets safer.

We've done things for working families like the family leave law and tax cuts for 15 million families who live on modest incomes. But there's still too much family break-up. There are too many children born where

there were never families in the first place. There's a lot to be done here.

We're making great changes in our Government. It's smaller, it's more effective, but there is still more to be done before we liberate our National Government from the stranglehold of special interests.

We must be thankful with all of our challenges for what's right with America. And we have to remember that the real strength of our country is still in the work of our citizens. They're the ones who keep our country strong, who keep us together, who keep us moving forward. They're what America is all about, people who take responsibility to improve their own lives and to make a difference in the lives of others.

I'm committed to make your Government work for ordinary Americans again. Nobody wants Government on our backs, but we do need a strong, if limited Government by our side. Everything we do in Washington should be as relevant and responsive to your lives as the work of those just around you.

Consider the Americans who are fighting crime. Just last month, several strangers in New York City came to the rescue of a man who was being mugged and stabbed as he tried to use a bank teller machine. These brave heroes helped the victim to safety and then held the assailant down until police could come to make an arrest. Our new crime bill puts 100,000 more police on the streets and takes military assault weapons off the streets, but we still need citizens like this to make our streets safe.

Remember the Americans who are doing so much to help others. Every day thousands of members of our new domestic peace corps, AmeriCorps, are working to make our people smarter, safer, and healthier. Out in rural Kansas, Nanci Ridge has been trained by AmeriCorps to give emergency medical assistance. Now every day she helps police or fire departments or teaches school kids safety. But she spent Thanksgiving fielding emergencies at the local county hospital, giving some of the regular staff the holiday off, and keeping the country protected. That's what AmeriCorps is about; that's what America's about.

And finally, let's think about the Americans who are doing so much to help our chil-

dren live up to their God-given potential. Five years ago in Buffalo, New York, Lloyd Hargrave helped start a parent resource center to get parents more involved in the education of their children. Today the center offers nightly tutoring programs to help parents do a better job at helping their children learn. And the center lends computers to families that otherwise wouldn't have them in their homes.

Working with children in that way is one of the most important things any of us can do to keep our country strong. Our Government can help, and we are. We're expanding Head Start, promoting programs in our schools like character education. But in the end, children need to know that adults care about them, that they're part of a loving family, a caring community. They need to be told by someone that they're the most important person in the world.

So this holiday season as we count our blessings and face our challenges, let us commit ourselves to giving our children a future they can be thankful for every Thanksgiving for a long, long time.

I hope you enjoy this holiday weekend, and thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:29 a.m. on November 25 in the Laurel Lodge at Camp David, MD, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 26.

Remarks on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

November 28, 1994

Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President. Jim Miller and Jim Baker, thank you for your moving and compelling remarks. Mr. Speaker, Leader Michel, Members of the Congress, members of the Cabinet, and to all of you who have come here from previous administrations and from different walks of life, proving that this GATT agreement not only tears down trade barriers, it also bulldozes differences of party, philosophy, and ideology: I thank you all for being here.

We have certainly demonstrated today that there is no partisan pride of ownership in the GATT agreement. It is not a Republican agreement or a Democratic one. It is an

American agreement, designed to benefit all the American people in every region of our country from every walk of life.

Jim Baker spoke so eloquently about how this represents yet another historic choice for the United States in the 20th century. When we walked away from our leadership and engagement responsibilities, as we did after the First World War, the world has paid a terrible price. When we have attempted to lead, as we did after the Second World War, it has not only helped the world, it has helped the people of the United States. We saw the greatest expansion of the middle class in our country and prosperity for working families in our country in the years after we tried to put together a system that would preserve peace and security and promote prosperity after World War II.

We have done as much as we could here at home to try to deal with the difficult and daunting economic challenges we face, to bring the deficit down, to shrink the size of the Government, to simultaneously increase our investment in education and technology and defense conversion. But we know that without the capacity to expand trade and to generate more economic opportunities we will, first of all, not be able to fulfill our global responsibilities and, secondly, not be able to fulfill our responsibilities to the American people.

I'd like to address a third argument, if I might, just from my heart. It's been raised against this agreement and raised against NAFTA. Jim Miller adequately disposed of the arguments that this is a budget buster and that this somehow impinges on our sovereignty. That isn't true. And he did a very compelling job of that. But let me say there is another big argument against this trade agreement that no one has advanced today but that is underlying all of this. And I saw it in an article the other day written by a columnist generally sympathetic to me. He said, "There he goes again with one of his crazy, self-defeating economic ideas, pushing this GATT agreement, which is one more prescription for the demise of the lower wage working people in America, which is the reason the Democratic Party's in the trouble it's in today, doing things like this that just kill working people."